

# SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress  
1st Session

Vote No. 364

August 4, 1995, 5:47 p.m.  
Page S-11403 Temp. Record

## DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION/\$7 Billion Cut

**SUBJECT:** National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1996 . . . S. 1026. Thurmond motion to table the Kohl amendment No. 2119.

### ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 51-46

**SYNOPSIS:** As reported, S. 1026, the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 1996, will authorize \$264.7 billion in total budget authority for the Department of Defense, national security programs of the Department of Energy, civil defense, and military construction accounts. This amount is \$7 billion more than requested (\$5.3 billion more for procurement and \$1.7 billion more for research and development), and is \$2.6 billion less than the amount approved in the House-passed bill.

**The Kohl amendment** would limit the total amount authorized by this Act for fiscal year (FY) 1996 to \$257.7 billion.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. Following debate, Senator Thurmond moved to table the Kohl amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

**Those favoring** the motion to table contended:

In testimony before the Armed Services Committee one member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff after another told the Committee that the defense budget estimates were in compliance with the numbers they were given by the Clinton Administration. One by one, they then listed areas where more funding was needed. They told us that they did not have the amounts they needed to meet defense requirements. Our colleagues have repeatedly stressed that this bill authorizes \$7 billion more than the Defense Department asked for--in truth, it provides \$7 billion more than President Clinton would allow it to ask for.

In his State of the Union address this year, President Clinton claimed he was against further defense cuts. He then betrayed his words by proposing an additional \$5.7 billion cut (in real terms, a \$13 billion cut) this year. Our colleagues want us to accept that further gutting of defense. In total, they want us to reduce it by 10 percent over the next several years. In effect, they want our military forces to be at roughly half the size they were in 1985 by the year 2002. To achieve these drastic cuts, the President has fudged the

(See other side)

YEAS (51)			NAYS (46)			NOT VOTING (3)	
Republicans (46 or 87%)		Democrats (5 or 11%)	Republicans (7 or 13%)		Democrats (39 or 89%)	Republicans (1)	Democrats (2)
Abraham	Hutchison	Heflin	Brown	Akaka	Harkin	Stevens <sup>-2</sup>	Bumpers <sup>-2</sup>
Ashcroft	Inhofe	Inouye	Grassley	Baucus	Hollings		Pryor <sup>-2</sup>
Bennett	Kassebaum	Lieberman	Gregg	Biden	Johnston		
Bond	Kempthorne	Nunn	Hatfield	Bingaman	Kennedy		
Burns	Kyl	Robb	Jeffords	Boxer	Kerrey		
Campbell	Lott		Roth	Bradley	Kerry		
Chafee	Lugar		Simpson	Breaux	Kohl		
Coats	Mack			Bryan	Lautenberg		
Cochran	McCain			Byrd	Leahy		
Cohen	McConnell			Conrad	Levin		
Coverdell	Murkowski			Daschle	Mikulski		
Craig	Nickles			Dodd	Moseley-Braun		
D'Amato	Packwood			Dorgan	Moynihan		
DeWine	Pressler			Exon	Murray		
Dole	Santorum			Feingold	Pell		
Domenici	Shelby			Feinstein	Reid		
Faircloth	Smith			Ford	Rockefeller		
Frist	Snowe			Glenn	Sarbanes		
Gorton	Specter			Graham	Simon		
Gramm	Thomas				Wellstone		
Grams	Thompson						
Hatch	Thurmond						
Helms	Warner						

#### EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business  
2—Necessarily Absent  
3—Illness  
4—Other

#### SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea  
AN—Announced Nay  
PY—Paired Yea  
PN—Paired Nay

numbers. He has slashed the number of Armed Forces personnel, which he has justified by claiming he would equip the remainder with the most modern technology available and would improve training and readiness standards. The opposite has occurred. Procurement has been slashed, training has fallen, and readiness has slipped. According to the General Accounting Office, President Clinton's defense plan may be underfunded by as much as \$150 billion. The Kohl amendment would reduce spending to the level pushed by President Clinton.

Procurement accounts have been reduced by 71 percent since 1985. A decade ago, we purchased 720 tanks a year. Today we buy none. Annual purchases of ships and aircraft have declined 80 percent and 87 percent respectively. Dozens of major weapons programs and more than a hundred smaller ones have been terminated. As the Congressional Budget Office has put it, the Pentagon has entered a "procurement holiday." This failure to modernize our forces has occurred because President Clinton has taken a holiday from the truth, refusing to acknowledge the serious damage he is doing to our Armed Forces with his deep defense cuts.

Readiness levels have also declined. Last September, three Army divisions reported readiness levels of C-3, which is the worst record since the Carter Administration. Overall readiness for active Navy aviation squadrons declined from 75 percent in 1990 to 61 percent last year. Funding shortfalls in the 2d Marine Air Wing's flying hour program resulted in 11 of 30 squadrons reporting in the two lowest readiness categories for the 4th quarter of fiscal year 1994. In short, our defense forces have been slashed, and those soldiers who are left are being poorly trained and equipped.

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has been involved in 18 conflicts. Our forces in Europe have been cut by approximately two-thirds in the past 5 years, but they have been deployed more often in those 5 years than they were in the previous 45 years. Air Force deployments have quadrupled in the last 7 years though end strengths have declined by one-third. The average soldier now spends 138 days each year away from home on extended, short notice deployments. High deployment rates, erosion in pay, little training, and less-than-modern, old equipment and weaponry have decimated morale among our troops.

Despite all these facts, our colleagues say that the Defense Department is not paying its "fair share." The debt we have is due to rising entitlement costs; social spending on nonentitlements has remained constant, and defense spending has declined. Our colleagues tell us how important it is for us "to invest" in more social spending programs. By any honest measure the Great Society social welfare programs have done absolutely nothing to reduce poverty in America. Trillions of dollars have been spent with devastating effect: millions of lives have been spent uselessly and hopelessly trapped in Government dependency, with all its numerous attendant social pathologies. Our colleagues solution is more money more money more money. They beg for suffocating Government care when the solutions are personal responsibility and freedom. The Government's primary duty is to defend the Nation from internal and external threats. Our colleagues would leave America defenseless in order to free up more resources for their redistributionist social policies. It is quite instructive that nearly every Senator who has spoken in favor of the Kohl amendment has talked about how much they would like to spend the savings on health care, education, welfare, or some other social purpose. We have heard very little concern about reducing the deficit.

The United States has frequently gutted its defense forces in the past, and then has been caught unprepared when it has been drawn into a new war. The costs in blood and money of being caught unprepared are enormous. For 50 years we have found that we can preserve the peace by being prepared for war. We are not about to abandon that lesson, and thus oppose the Kohl amendment.

**Those opposing the motion to table contended:**

We are spending far too much on defense. We are not at war, and we do not face any formidable enemies. The United States spends three times the amount each year on defense as does all its potential adversaries put together. Our colleagues are simply not facing reality. As if by habit, we are still armed to the teeth, peering over the ramparts at an enemy who is no longer there.

As we wait, and pile more and more weapons up to defend against a nonexistent enemy, we drain scarce resources from a tired nation. The United States is so busy guarding against nonexistent threats that it ignores the domestic threats that are corroding America. The United States, to be great, must begin investing in its citizens. We need more money for school lunches, more money for education, more money for home heating assistance, and more money for infrastructure, health care, and crime prevention. If we are not willing to invest to find a cure for AIDS, a cure will not be found. If we are not willing to invest in our children's education, we will be unable to compete in the future.

Most of us who support the Kohl amendment believe the greatest thing we can do with the savings from cutting defense is to spend it on needed social concerns. Others of us are convinced that the most important use would be to reduce the crushing debt burden. We are all painfully aware, though, that we are spending far too much on defense. Even if the Cold War were continuing, this defense authorization bill is full of wasteful, unjustified spending. Both the Comanche and the Osprey aircraft are examples of spending boondoggles which we have attempted to kill for years that are still authorized in this post-Cold War budget. Additionally, we find it interesting that 81 percent of the 5 billion in unauthorized, earmarked procurement programs in this bill are located in the home States of members of the Armed Services Committee and Defense Appropriations subcommittee.

In sum, those Senators who insist that cutting a \$264 billion budget by a mere \$7 billion will destroy our defense capabilities are clearly exaggerating. Their claim is especially suspect when the United States has no enemy that poses a credible threat. We urge Senators to face the reality that we cannot afford to pay for a massive defense force that we do not need. The Kohl amendment, by

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any reasonable measure, proposes a very modest cut. We urge Senators to vote against the motion to table this amendment.